

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25 EA-11 NEA-14 ISO-00 SCI-06

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INFO AEC GERMANTOWN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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TAGS: PORG, OCON, IAEA

SUBJECT: IAEA 18TH GC: ELECTIONS TO BOARD OF GOVERNORS

REF: (A) IAEA VIENNA 7693 (NOTAL); (B) IAEA VIENNA 7899 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING FINAL DAY
ELECTED ELEVEN MEMBERS TO TWO-YEAR TERMS ON BOARD OF
GOVERNORS AFTER NARROWLY AVERTING AN UNPRECEDENTED
IMPASSE IN COMPETITION FOR REGIONAL SEAT BETWEEN IRAN
AND IRAQ. NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBERS ARE: BRAZIL,
VENEZUELA, URUGUAY, THAILAND, IRAN, G.D.R., ZAIRE,
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ZAMBIA, SPAIN, TURKEY, IRAQ. END SUMMARY

1. FILLING OF VACANCIES WHICH PERIODICALLY OCCUR ON POWERFUL 34-MEMBER BOARD OF GOVERNORS IS NORMALLY A ROUTINE AFFAIR, SINCE CANDIDATES ARE PRE-ELECTED BY CONSENSUS OF 8 GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS REPRESENTED ON BOARD. ELECTION OF NINE CANDIDATES AT THE GC FOLLOWED USUAL PATTERN WITH NO PROBLEM. HOWEVER, AS NOTED REF A, SERIOUS PROBLEM DEVELOPED IN LAST FEW WEEKS RE QUESTION OF WHICH COUNTRY WAS TO SUCCEED SAUDIA ARABIA ON BOARD, REPRESENTING MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA. CANDIDACY OF IRAN, WHICH HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED IN MAY AND WHICH ENJOYED THE PLEDGED SUPPORT OF MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF REGION, WAS CHALLENGED IN RECENT WEEKS BY IRAQ. DISPUTE WAS NOT RESOLVED UNTIL BALLOTING TIME.

2. IRAQI DELEGATION ANNOUNCED ITS CANDIDACY WITH AGGRESSIVE LOBBYING, POINTING OUT THAT IRAQ WAS SUPPORTED FOR SEAT BY ARAB LEAGUE. THIS WAS EFFECTIVE TACTIC. MOST DELEGATIONS HAVE STANDING INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTE FOR CANDIDATE WITH SUPPORT OF MAJORITY OF MEMBERS BY GEOGRAPHIC REGION AND IRAQI CLAIM CALLED INTO QUESTION EXTENT OF IRAN'S SUPPORT (US RESREP WAS IN FACT INFORMED BY EGYPTIAN AND LEBANESE AMBASSADORS THAT TO THEIR DISMAY THEY HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO SUPPORT IRAQ, REVERSING EARLIER DECISION TO BACK IRAN).

3. AS CONFERENCE PROCEEDED, HOWEVER, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT ARAB LEAGUE NOTWITHSTANDING, IRAN STILL HAD SUPPORT OF MESA AREA, WHICH INCLUDES SUCH NON-ARAB STATES AS BURMA, INDIA, AND SRI LANKA AND, FURTHERMORE, THAT IRAQ HAD INCURRED RESENTMENT OF MANY OTHER MEMBERS THROUGH USE OF HEAVY-HANDED TACTICS. FOR EXAMPLE, ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE IRAQIS THAT INTERESTS OF ALL WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY WITHDRAWAL OF IRAQI CANDIDACY UNTIL 1975 (WHEN SEAT HELD BY PAKISTAN WOULD BE VACATED) WERE BRUSQUELY TURNED ASIDE. AT SAME TIME, IDEA OF POLITICAL CONFRONTATION AT NORMALLY NON-POLITICAL GC WAS HIGHLY DISTASTEFUL TO MOST DELEGATES. ONE PROPOSAL FOR RESOLVING DEADLOCK WAS TO OFFER IRAQ THE "FLOATING SEAT" BEING VACATED BY LEBANON, WHICH WAS SHARED BY MESA AND TWO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS. THOUGH IDEA WAS ACCEPTABLE TO IRAN (WHICH MAINTAINED ITS POISE THROUGHOUT), IRAQIS INSISTED WITH CONSIDERABLE LACK OF GRACE THAT THEY WERE INTERESTED ONLY IN MESA SEAT, STRENGTHENING IMPRESSION THAT IRAQ WAS LESS INTERESTED IN BOARD MEMBERSHIP THAN IN THWARTING IRAN'S CANDIDACY.

4. IRAQI INTRANSIGENCE REMAINED UNCHANGED UNTIL

MOMENTS BEFORE BALLOTING BEGAN WHEN, APPARENTLY
CONVINCED BY STRENGTH OF SUPPORT FOR IRAN, IRAQI
DELEGATION PUT OUT WORD THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT
UNCONTESTED "FLOATING SEAT." PRUDENCE OF IRAQI
CHANGE OF HEART WAS SHOWN BY ANNOUNCED TALLY OF SECRET
BALLOT, IN WHICH 72 VOTES WERE CAST FOR IRAN AND ONLY
2 FOR IRAQ. IRAQ WAS ELECTED TO "FLOATING SEAT" BY 53
VOTES OUT OF TOTAL 71 CAST. (EGYPT, NOT EVEN ACTIVELY
RUNNING FOR SEAT, RECEIVED 15 VOTES DUE TO IRRITATION
WITH IRAQIS AND TO FEELING THAT "FLOATING SEAT" SHOULD
NOT BE HELD CONSECUTIVELY BY SAME GEOGRAPHIC REGION.)

5. COMMENT: OUTCOME CAME AS RELIEF TO MOST, WITH CON-
FRONTATION AND RUN-OFF BALLOTING AVERTED. HOWEVER,
EPISODE SUGGESTS THAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN LAST OF MIDDLE
EAST RIVALRIES TO IAEA AND THAT THE GC MAY HAVE BOUGHT
PEACE AT ITS 18TH REGULAR SESSION AT THE PRICE OF SOME
TRANQUILITY AT FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS.
END COMMENT. TAPE

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